

2013 BLACK AFFAIRS ADVISORY BOARD'S COMMUNITY PILLARS



Dr. Vincent K. Omachonu is an Associate Professor of Industrial Engineering at the University of Miami. He received his Ph.D. in Industrial Engineering from the Polytechnic Institute of New York, Brooklyn. He has two masters degrees one in Operations Research from Columbia University, New York, and the other in Industrial Engineering from the University of Miami, Florida. His B.S. degree is also in Industrial Engineering from the University of Miami. Dr. Omachonu was one of the early contributors to the field of health care quality management. His seminal book titled Total Quality and Productivity Management in Health Care Organizations received the Institute of Industrial Engineers Joint Publishers Book-of-the-Year Award in 1993. Dr. Omachonu is a Master Black Belt in Six Sigma.



Melton Shakir Mustafa has performed with some of the top names in JAZZ including the Count Basie Orchestra, Duke Ellington Orchestra, Woody Herman Orchestra, Bobby Watson, Jaco Pastorius, George Cables, John Hicks, Charlie Mingus Dynasty, and Gunter Shuller, among many others. Mustafa has played in many of the international Jazz Festival which includes the Playboy Jazz Festival, North Sea Jazz Festival, Ravina Jazz Festival, SS Norway Jazz Festival, Montreal Jazz Festival, Lugano Jazz Festival (Italy), Pori Jazz Festival, Charlie Mingus Epitaph Orchestra in Russia and many others. As a traveling artist, Mustafa manages to conduct his duties as an educator. Mustafa is currently the Director of Jazz Studies at Florida Memorial University where he teaches Music Theory, Jazz Composition and other jazz related courses.



Jacques R. Laroche is the founder and president of Unique Design, Inc., a multi-award winning interior decorating and manufacturing company, with clients in Florida, Arizona, Georgia, Pennsylvania, New York, Canada and the Caribbean. Jacques is also the founder of the first Minority Chamber of Commerce and (UCOMB) United Coalition of Minority Business of South Dade. UCOMB, a community business center based in South Miami-Dade, boasts more than 300 members representing 24 countries.



Rev. Darryl K. Baxter is the Founder and President of The Family Foundation, Inc. a volunteer HIV/AIDS awareness organization founded by him in 1990. The Family Foundation, Inc. was formed after losing his brother Stevie to this horrific disease. After the tragic loss of his brother, Rev. Baxter felt the passion and the need to go out and educate the world about HIV/AIDS. With this effort, The Family Foundation conducts seminars and meetings throughout South Florida, bringing awareness and education to the citizens in our communities. Additionally, Rev. Baxter is a member of the Network of Local Alliances for AIDS Awareness and, has served on the National AIDS Task Force, under Former President Clinton's Administration.



Rodney Baltimore is Executive Producer and Co-Host of the Tom Joyner Morning Show on WHQT-HOT 105 FM Radio. Well known in the community, he is an industry veteran having worked at, among other stations, WRBD, WOKB and WEDR 99 JAMZ.

A true community activist, for and ‘about’ the people, Rodney has a genuine desire and calling to help those in need and he continues to have a major impact on this community with his extraordinary community outreach. The level of his community service is unparalleled. His interviews play a key role in informing South Floridians about upcoming events, opportunities to serve and to help others. Rodney is a tireless advocate for the underprivileged in our community and is an active member in more than a dozen organizations.



Apostle Willie T. Harris III has provided community services for over twenty-five years and he is a beacon of hope for the homeless. A strong advocate for revitalizing his community and development of the youth who coaches, mentors, trains and provides assistance when the community is in need of help. Apostle Harris fulfills many roles in the community and is very recognized by the other leaders in the outreach community.

Apostle Harris has served his community for numerous amounts of years with the same diligence of love, kindness, giving guidance and care. He has through his character build broken families, mend torn relationships, housed the homeless, fed the hungry, clothed the naked, and given comfort to the weak. He is “A Community Champ” who works hard to defeat homelessness, fight poverty, hunger, abuse, child neglect and support those suffering from chronic mental illness.



Penelope Townsley In October, 2011, Penelope Townsley became Miami-Dade County's first Black Supervisor of Elections. Ms. Townsley is responsible for administering elections for the largest elections operation in the State of Florida, overseeing elections for more than 1.2 million registered voters with 20 Early Voting locations and as many as 829 Election Day precincts. She is a career public servant with over 30 years of employment with Miami-Dade County, including 15 years with the Department of Business and Economic Development. In 2003, Ms. Townsley was appointed Deputy Supervisor of Elections with the Elections Department to restructure the organization and develop guiding principles. She was later promoted to Chief Deputy Supervisor of Elections in 2006. One year later, Ms. Townsley was appointed as the Director of Miami-Dade County's Department of Small Business Development where she served for four years.